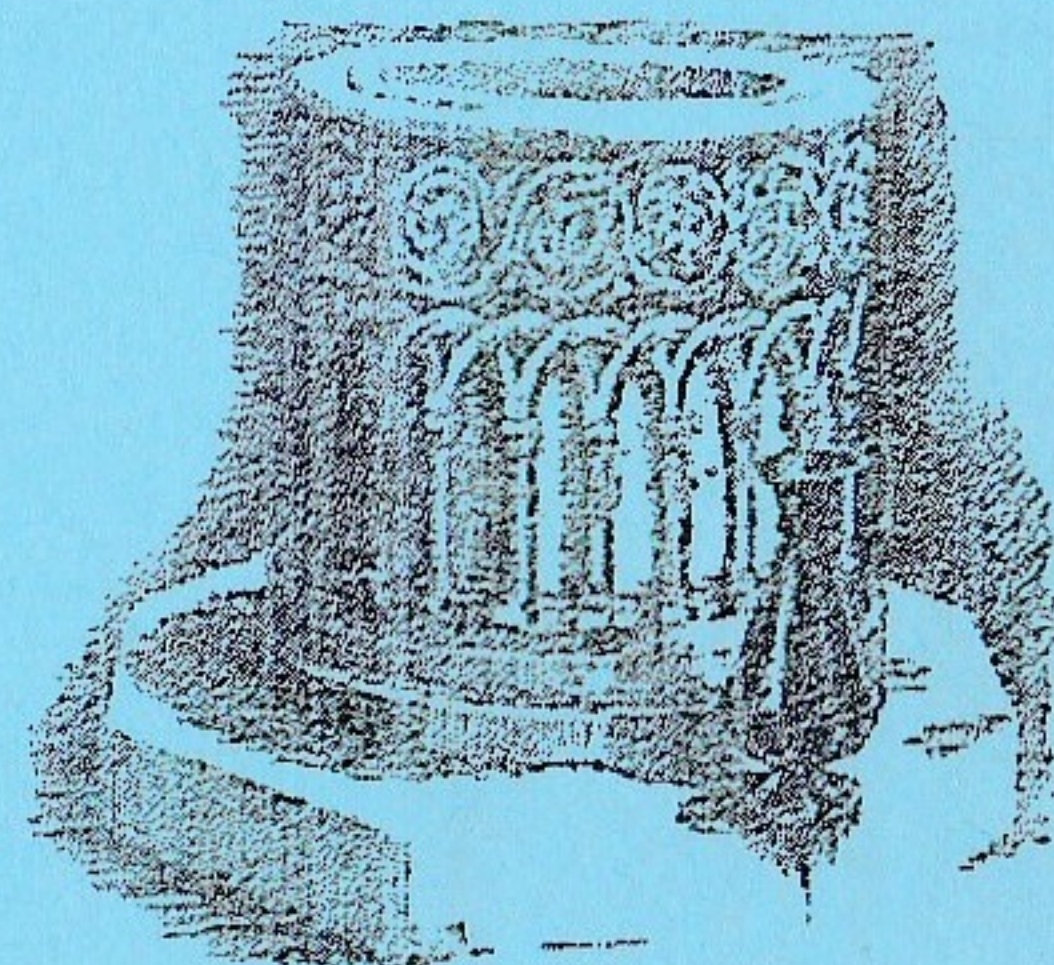


You have just entered a Norman church of great simplicity and beauty. Built in the 1120s of Isle of Wight stone for a community of Augustinian canons (monks) from France. Their priory buildings once stretched south to the Roman wall.

- 1 On your left is the 12th Century font, but with a modern base. It is carved in Caen limestone with interlaced stems and mythical birds and beasts. It is here that many generations have begun their Christian life.



The Font

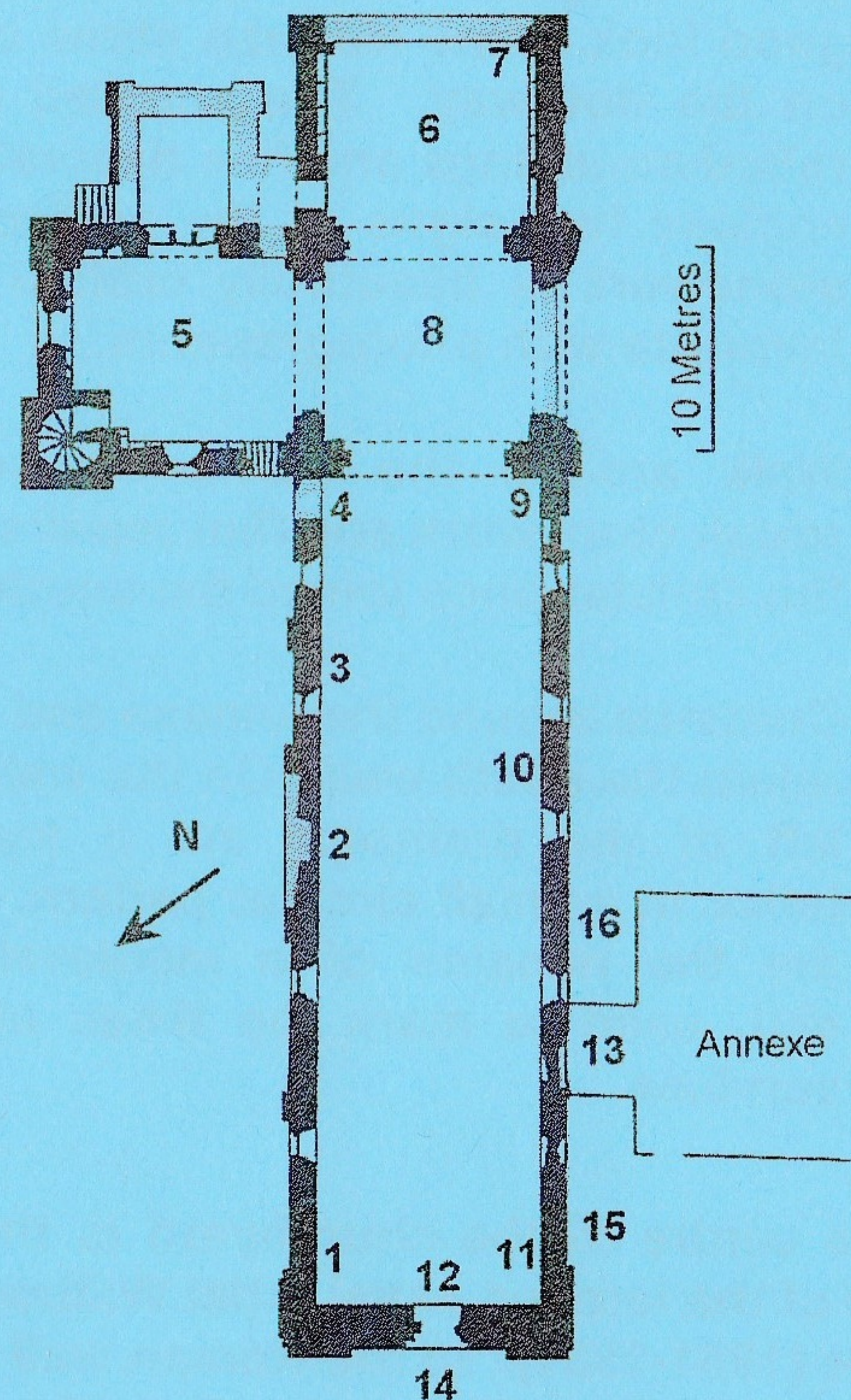
You may choose to pray:

*Lord, lead me from death to life;
From despair to hope;
from fear to trust;
From hate to love;
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts,
Our world, our universe.
Amen.*

You are standing in the nave, from the Latin word “navis” meaning boat, as the ceiling resembles an upturned boat.

- 2 In the north wall is a medieval doorway, believed to have been used by members of the castle. It now commemorates the lengthy ministry of Revd. Longlands.

The plaque above records the grant of £400 from Queen Anne in 1710 to repair the church after misuse by Dutch prisoners in the 17th Century.



- 3 The brass memorial commemorates the sacrifice of local men in the Great War, 1914-1918.

- 4 Further along is a small “squint” window. The glass is a memorial to Captain Alfred S. Russell, DSO, Royal Navy 1897-1945. The dedication, reads “Che Sera Sera” and depicts a sword and naval motif.

- 5 To your left, through a beautiful arch and the simplest of pillars, is the north transept. This has the oldest ceiling—Elizabethan—in the church and access via a walkway to the three bells in the tower. Recessed into the walls are the seats once used by the canons.

- 6 Our eyes are drawn to the east window in the chancel. This window was inserted in the 16th Century, but has modern stained glass. Its design reminds us of the price of love at the crucifixion.

You may choose to pray, to light a candle or take a prayer card.

God, our father, we thank you for the love of Jesus and the price He paid on the cross for our peace and reconciliation. Amen.

- 7 To the right of the east window is the effigy of Sir Thomas Cornwallis, the last royal constable of the castle. He persuaded Queen Elizabeth I to fund the removal of the derelict south transept and rebuild the east wall of the Church. She visited Portchester castle in 1601 at the end of her reign.



Sir Thomas Cornwallis

- 8 Return to the crossing under the tower. Pause for a moment to remember those who exchange marriage vows at this spot.

You may choose to pray:

*Our heavenly father, we think of those who come here to make their marriage vows.
Bless them in their lives together. Amen.*

9 To your left is the Victorian pulpit. The south wall here once gave access to the cloisters through one or other of the two door spaces. The other corresponding door is now the entrance to the Annexe.

10 Further along this wall is a panel—the oldest Elizabethan one in Hampshire—commemorating the grant to the church in 1577.

11 Past the organ is the church notice board, which reflects the active life of the Christian community here today. Pause to have a read - you are very welcome to come along to any of our services or events.

12 In the west wall, above the Victorian vestibule, is a window depicting The Good Shepherd, inserted in 1899. There was once a gallery here accommodating 65 worshippers and musicians.

13 If the door is open, walk through the medieval doorway to the annexe. On your left is the 18th Century tomb stone of Peter Ryebread, a member of an old Portchester family. The annexe is where the Sunday School and other community groups meet and where tea and coffee are served.

Now return to the main door of the Church.

You may wish to pray:

We pray that all who leave this house of God may leave with the knowledge of a loving Father who cares for them, their family and friends. Amen.

14 On leaving the Church, please take a good look at the Norman stone carving on the doorway. The scrolled pillars, rolled mouldings and fine decorations enclose two signs of the zodiac. The stonework is beautifully crafted and a favourite with photographers.

15 Walk around the corner to see the rough stonework and flint repairs where the cloister once joined the south wall.

16 Continue around the annexe and rejoin the south wall. On the wall to the left of the drainpipe are a series of holes in a small circular pattern. These are the remains of a medieval mass dial, used to mark the times of mass services.

In the centre of the churchyard is the large tomb of the famous naval artist William Wyllie (1851-1931). In the Roman wall are the remnants of the toilet shutes from the monastic buildings.

Some 25m SW of the West door is the grave of Thomas Goble, which was restored in 2005. Goble, who had been writer to Nelson at Trafalgar, was later pensioned off and lived in the High Street, Fareham, where he enjoyed a colourful retirement.

As you leave, you will pass through the lychgate (from the Old English *lic* meaning a corpse) where, by tradition, the coffin was rested until the clergy arrived.

We trust you have enjoyed your visit to St Mary's Church and look forward to welcoming you back soon. Don't forget to pick up our weekly notice sheet as you go.



CHURCH GUIDE

St. Mary's Church Office

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